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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION WASHINGTON, D. C.

34TH YEAR

October 10, 1977

No. 41



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On storing jellied fruit products . . let uncooked jams stay in the refrigerator up to 3 weeks .. but for longer storage, they should be placed in a freezer, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture home economists.

* * *

Commercial fruit pectins are made from apples or citrus fruits, and are available in either liquid or powdered form. They may be used with any fruit.

* * *

Did your homemade jelly turn out to be too soft? You either used too much juice in the mixture . . too little sugar . . not enough acid . . or -- too much at one time.

* * *

"Conserves" are...jam-like mixtures of two or more fruits plus nuts or raisins or both. They are rich in flavor and have a thick, but not sticky or gummy, consistency.

* * *

Using dry yeast? Remember to store it a dry, cool place.

SOLAR ENERGY

--- 'N' INSECTS

Solar cells, originally developed to power satellites in outer space, are now being used for a variety of applications on earth. One use is to protect crops from insects. How? Trap 'em. A new experiment by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Energy Research and Development Administration is to use solar energy to trap the insects so that damage to crops may be reduced.

Information obtained by the traps can be used to reduce damage to crops in effective insect control programs. Electric power produced by the solar cells during the day charges storage batteries which provide electricity for powering the traps at night. Fluorescent blacklight is one of the methods used in testing. The computer also assists in this...data is collected and made available to help predict future insect populations.

One advantage of the solar powered traps is they may be placed anywhere since no power lines are needed.

YOUR FOOD DOLLAR

----- THEN AND NOW (1965-1975)

American consumers spent their food dollars much the same way in 1975 as they did in 1965, according to a recent study* made by economists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Small changes in buying habits were reported in categories of foods for some individual items such as presweetened cocoa and processed cheese. Consumers' use of these foods increased 100 percent during the ten year period.

Other items with notable changes, according to the survey, include: oils and sugar about 60 percent increase, and margarine and ready-to-eat cereal, 40 to 45 percent. The purchases of frozen plate dinners, entrees, and soups, and fresh vegetables (excluding potatoes) each increased about 20 to 25 percent. However, less than \$1 for every \$100 worth of food was allocated for each of these foods, and therefore, the substantial percentage increases for these individual foods had only a small impact on their food group (based on the four food groups).

Fresh, unprocessed foods continue to be popular as they accounted for 46 percent of the food dollars spent in 1965 -- and again in 1975.

* According to original data from the 19th annual study on consumer spending by Supermarketing magazine and studied by USDA economists for food comparisons.

NEW BIBLIOGRAPHY

---- ON FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

A new list of home gardening and home processing publications, "A Bibliography of Fruits and Vegetables For The Home Gardener and Home Processor," MP 1359, has been published (Sept. 1977) by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Services, and the Agricultural Experiment Stations.

This bibliography - publications in these areas from 1965 to 1975 - contains references to culture, gardening, canning, freezing, and drying of fruits and vegetables and will be of use mainly to those who advise home gardeners and homemakers. Berries are listed with fruits, and melons with vegetables.

COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR A WEEK (AUGUST 1977)

	Thrifty plan	Low-cost plan	Moderate- cost plan	Liberal plan
FAMILIES				
Young couple.....	\$23.60	\$31.30	\$39.40	\$47.20
Elderly couple.....	21.20	28.00	34.60	41.60
Family of 4 with preschool children.....	33.30	43.60	54.50	65.30
Family of 4 with elementary school children.....	40.00	52.50	65.90	79.10
INDIVIDUALS*				
Women				
20-54 years.....	9.70	12.90	16.00	19.10
55 years and over.....	8.80	11.60	14.30	17.00
Men				
20-54 years.....	11.80	15.60	19.80	23.80
55 years and over.....	10.50	13.90	17.20	20.80
Children				
1-2 years.....	5.30	6.90	8.50	10.10
3-5 years.....	6.50	8.20	10.20	12.30
6-8 years.....	8.20	10.70	13.40	16.10
9-11 years.....	10.30	13.30	16.70	20.10
Girls 12-19 years.....	9.80	12.70	15.80	18.80
Boys 12-14 years.....	11.00	14.10	17.70	21.30
15-19 years.....	12.10	15.70	19.60	23.70

* Cost of food at home for any family can be figured by totaling costs shown for individuals of sex and age of various members of the family as follows:

- o For those eating all meals at home (or carrying some meals from home), use amounts shown.
- o For those eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent from amount in table for each meal not eaten at home. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent or one-fourth the cost shown.
- o For guests, include for each meal eaten, 5 percent of amount shown in table for the proper age group.

Next, adjust the total figure if more or fewer than four people generally eat at the family table. Costs shown are for individuals in 4-person families. Adjustment is necessary because larger families tend to buy and use foods more economically than smaller ones. Thus, for a 1-person family, add 20 percent; 2 persons, add 10 percent; 3, add 5 percent; 4, use as is; 5 or 6, subtract 5 percent; 7 or more, subtract 10 percent.

Note: The publication "Family Food Budgeting for Good Meals and Good Nutrition," Home and Garden Bulletin No. 94, describes USDA's thrifty food plan (used in setting the coupon allotment in the Food Stamp Program) and the three more costly plans, on which these costs are based. Single copies are available from the Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Request publication by name and number and include your ZIP code.

ON USDA GRADING ----- OF TOMATO PRODUCTS

Color is a major factor in determining the U.S. grade standards of manufactured tomato products, according to the Food Safety and Quality Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Under a new proposal by USDA, an electric color meter (known as a "colorimeter") may be used to determine the grades of manufactured tomato products. Color is one of the most important guides to this phase of grading.



A colorimeter is an electric color meter used to evaluate color in these products. Actually, under the new proposal, any carefully calibrated and standardized electronic color meter system can be used if it has been approved by USDA. However, color may still be evaluated visually according to USDA'S Food Safety and Quality Service.

The Cannery League of California requested the changes in grade standards for two products to permit the use of the colorimeter. The machine has helped to minimize visual error caused by eye fatigue and eliminated the need for the precise lighting conditions that are essential for accurate visual evaluation of color.

Comments may be made on the proposal to the Hearing Clerk, Room 1077-S., U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wash., DC 20250. Comments are available for public inspection.

FOOD and Home notes, a weekly newsletter directed to mass media outlets, is published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Communication, Washington, D.C. 20250. Editor: Shirley Wagener....Phone: 202-447-5898.
